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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8533
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 8361
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0157
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ PRIORITY 0137
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0140
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 0154
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHL/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 000128

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON
DOE FOR GPERSON, CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELD
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/16/2017

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [EPET](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: SITREP 17: GRAHAM & AKWA STILL HOSTAGE; SSS AWAITS
ELDER'S RETURN

REF: A. LAGOS 124

[1](#)B. LAGOS 110

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) John Walker of Control Risks Group told the February 16 Pivot-GIS Hostage Crisis Group American Bill Graham and Nigerian Ezekiel Akwa remain hostages. The State Security Service (SSS) told Walker on February 15 they will wait for the return from the creek area of the tribal elder who is now acting as an intermediary between the SSS and the kidnappers.

SSS is hopeful the elder will emerge with an agreement for the release of Graham and Akwa (REF A) before attempting to pass Graham and Akwa's proof of life questions. Should the elder return with an agreement, Governor Odili will need to ratify it but the Governor will be unavailable this weekend, according to SSS. The Pivot-GIS group requested our help to contact the Governor to ensure he can be reached during the weekend. We have been attempting to contact the Governor's office to ascertain his thoughts on the hostage negotiations and to inform him of the company's concerns that he remain accessible over the weekend.

[1](#)2. (C) Walker said the SSS speculated the hope for a pre-Valentine's Day release was trumped by the "Red Alert" in Port Harcourt. (Note: SSS did not explain "Red Alert," though it likely refers to the increased military presence in

the area. (REF B) End Note.) Nor did SSS believe the abduction of a Frenchman February 7 complicated this case because a different group was responsible for that kidnapping. SSS could not confirm Prince Igodu engineered the kidnapping, Walker said, but commented Igodu has "tentacles everywhere." (Note: There are several variations on the spelling of Prince Igodu's name, including Igodo and Igido. End Note.)

13. (C) Walker also told the group Phillipa Graham, Bill Graham's wife, became angry when Walker told her Graham would not likely be released over the weekend. She was adamant the state government was "playing tricks" and talked about involving Golden, a youth leader in the Minikpiti village where Pivot-GIS is located. (REF A) In the end, Walker said he prevailed on Mrs. Graham to wait to see what transpires over the weekend.

BROWNE